

I am a member of Self Help for Hard-of-Hearing People, Inc. (SHHH). I have been hearing-impaired ever since I was a year old, and that was some time ago. I have a moderate-to-severe hearing loss and two hearing aids.

I use the closed captioning on television often and it has been a boon! I'll wear my hearing aids or I'll wear my headsets (without hearing aids), which has increased volume for listening to the TV, and I'll have the captioning turned on, just in case I miss any words.

When I get ready for work in the morning I don't wear my hearing aids as I bustle about. When I am drying my hair or putting on my clothing I will have the TV turned on for the weather and the local/national news so I need to have the captioning on because I can't hear the words at all on normal volume. I can't turn the volume up louder because I might still have trouble hearing the sound anyway, especially over the noise of the hairdryer, and because I don't want to wake up my husband who is retired, and because the sound would have to be so loud for me that the neighbors would hear it! So in the morning I don't have the sound turned on at all and, therefore, I use the captioning.

Probably the only time I don't have the closed captioning turned on is when they put the captions over people's faces! It blocks so much of the picture one might as well not even watch TV! So in these cases we turn the captioning off and I'll watch with my hearing aids or headset. But I'd really prefer to have the captioning on so can you please tell whoever (whomever?) does this to please put the captioning on the bottom of the screen. The best format for closed captioning, in my opinion, is when the picture is set up like a movie screen, with some blackness on the top and bottom. In this case the captioning scrolls across the bottom without disturbing the view of the screen at all. However, it is possible that some people might not like this setup.

Sometimes, when people call us in the middle of a show, especially if it is close to the end, my husband, who is not hearing-impaired, and I will turn off the sound but keep the captioning on so that we can finish watching the show but still maintain our telephone conversation.

All in all, I find the closed captioning most welcome, I would not like to see it disappear, and I am happy that it exists. In fact, I would like to see it be expanded as much as possible, especially to local news who quite often don't caption their "live" pieces; it is often quite annoying, and possibly even dangerous, not to be able to understand what is going on.

Sincerely yours,
Vickie Hogg